Approved For Release 2006/11/22 : CIA-RDP77M00144R001200080011-2

MORI/CDF Pages 2-4

Approved For Release 2006/11/22 : CIA-RDP77M00144R001200080011-2

Approved For Release 2006/11/22 : CIA-RDP77M00144R001200080011-2

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Agency Command and Control

1. Problem:

To consider whether Agency command and control procedures require strengthening.

2. Position of the SSC:

Both the SSC and HSC have addressed aspects of the command and control of the Agency, but the SSC appears to have concerned itself with the general subject more than has the HSC. SSC inquiries have focused on the character of Executive review and approval, as well as on CIA internal controls, almost exclusively in the context of the review of selected activities from the past. In some instances the SSC has seen a lack of detailed direction from and reporting to the Executive level that might have seemed implicit to the participants at the time under the broad policy of the moment. The SSC also is concerned over evidence that certain operational activity was conducted within CIA in the early 1960s without the knowledge of the DCI. While SSC Staff members are aware that they have concentrated on selected subject matter from the past, they feel that much of what they have seen reflects a basic flaw in the Agency's balance between compartmentation for security and maintenance of adequate command and control; in this sense they do not view what they have seen as atypical. As a third dimension to the question of Executive control of the Agency and internal Agency controls, the SSC probably is considering some extension of requirements for detailed reporting to the Congress.

3. Discussion:

The record of CIA's evolution from its creation in 1947 to the present is one of changing organizational posture to sharpen the focus of program direction. The steady growth of administrative procedures and controls represents growing sophistication

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of management techniques. The management achievements of the separate directorates can be detailed at length, but summary here would over-extend this paper.* Similarly, internal controls represented in the General Counsel, Inspector General, Audit Staff and budget reviews presided over by the Comptroller, serve to strengthen management's control over the Agency.

Throughout the Agency's history, regulations for management procedures and controls have progressed as the understanding of control requirements developed. These procedural provisions culminated in August 1973 with the comprehensive policy and program directives of the DCI, addressing not only procedures but the substantive nature of activities in which the Agency had engaged over the preceding years.

The main problem confronting managers of an intelligence organization is the handling of activities presenting special security considerations. The handling of classified paper does not, of itself, pose insurmountable obstacles. Intelligence analysts can be given the intelligence product without knowing the operational details of its acquisition. Administrators and support personnel usually can provide their services without unusual involvement in or exposure to operational activities. Operational considerations do, however, on occasion present special problems in normal management control.

There is a general operational compartmentation of the Directorate of Operations from the other directorates; however, this does not distort established and working procedures and command review within the Directorate. The problem seems to have arisen in those operations judged to be highly sensitive and therefore requiring special compartmented protection. The number of these in the Directorate of Operations is not large; the number of cases receiving "Prescribed and Limited" cable distribution averages below 5%, while those receiving "Restricted Handling" protection in cable traffic is below 1%. Even these fall into two categories--those that are strictly clandestine intelligence operations (such as sensitive audio operations or a specially sensitive agent) and those that involve some form of action (such as a CA program or MHCHAOS). It is in the latter instances that problems have arisen, receiving extra attention from the investigators. The inherent controversial character of the activities has heightened the critical quality of the examination,

* A more complete paper will be submitted at a later date by way of back-up for this one.

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In conclusion, the Agency's history of administrative growth is not only good but praiseworthy; at present it probably is more tightly controlled and directed than most large and complex organizations. However, from the Congressional point of view, based on selected historical examples, the Agency suffers a basic weakness in the adequacy and degree of command control and review of its highly compartmented action programs.

The Agency is faced with the problem of demonstrating to the Congress how extensive and strong are its organizational procedures, and to the extent possible further reinforcing those procedures as an indication of its intent to continue its efforts in this direction.

4. Recommendation:

a. That a study be prepared outlining the current procedures and techniques being used by the CIA for command and control and presenting recommendations for improvement in specific areas where the need for such is identified.

b. That action be taken to ensure full records of policy approval for sensitive, compartmented projects or programs, with some form of minimum staff review to ensure that each compartmented activity adheres to approved objectives and is implemented in a manner consistent with Agency standards.

/s/

Samuel V. Wilson
Lieutenant General, USA
Chairman, Action Plan Task Group

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